

NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION

1325 G STREET NW.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20576

October 21, 1981

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Interested and affected officials, agencies and organizations

FROM: Reginald W. Griffith, Executive Director *Reginald W. Griffith*

SUBJECT: Materials describing the National Capital Planning Commission

In a recent letter to you we indicated that in the near future we would be sending you materials describing the National Capital Planning Commission. Enclosed are those materials in the form of a staff statement entitled: "The National Capital Planning Commission: the Federal Government's Central Planning Agency in the National Capital Region."

This statement is intended to assist you in understanding the role and mission of the Commission in the National Capital Region. If you have any questions after reviewing it, or wish additional copies, please contact Mr. Samuel Frazier at 724-0174.

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THE NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S CENTRAL PLANNING AGENCY  
IN THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

October 14, 1981  
STAFF STATEMENT

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this brochure is to describe, with a minimum of detail, what the National Capital Planning Commission was established to do and how it carries out its responsibilities. In general terms, most of these responsibilities are set forth in the National Capital Planning Act of 1952, as amended by the District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act of 1973. The Act provides for the Commission to function as the central planning agency for the Federal Government in the National Capital Region. It is unique as a Federal agency, because there is no other comparable Federal planning body in the United States. Its uniqueness is derived from the fact that as the seat of government, the National Capital Region requires special planning and design consideration by the Federal Government in its programming and development activities.

The Commission is concerned with Federal matters both inside and outside the District of Columbia. The need for Commission interest outside of the District is necessitated by the following facts:

- o Federal facilities and installations are scattered throughout the Region.
- o Almost 90% of all Federally-owned land in the Region is located in Maryland and Virginia.
- o About 45% of all Federal employees in the Region work outside the District of Columbia.

### AGENCY OVERVIEW

Over the past three-quarters of a century, the responsibilities of the National Capital Planning Commission have grown significantly. Established in 1924 as a park planning agency, the Commission was reorganized and expanded in 1926 and 1952 to become what it is today - a comprehensive planning and intergovernmental coordinating body with a role in almost every aspect of planning that affects the National Capital. In fulfilling that role, the Commission works with all jurisdictions in the Region in a series of complex planning relationships arranged in five governmental levels:

- o City and county governments
- o Sub-regional agencies
- o Regional agencies
- o State governments
- o Federal Government

The Commission's area of jurisdiction is the National Capital Region, which is defined in the National Capital Planning Act of 1952, as amended, as the District of Columbia; Montgomery and Prince George's Counties in Maryland; Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William Counties in Virginia; and all cities now or existing in Maryland and Virginia within the geographic area bounded by the outer boundaries of the combined area of these counties.

Twelve members sit on the Commission, representing a cross-section of the various interests involved in Planning for the National Capital.

There are five appointed and seven ex-officio members. Three members

are appointed by the President; these include one resident each from Maryland and Virginia, and a third from anywhere in the United States. Two members are appointed by the Mayor of the District of Columbia and must be District residents. The seven ex-officio members are: Secretary of the Interior; Secretary of Defense; Administrator of the General Services; Mayor of the District of Columbia; Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia; Chairman, Committee on Governmental Affairs, United States Senate; and Chairman, Committee on the District of Columbia, United States House of Representatives. The President designates a Chairman from among the twelve commissioners.

#### FUNCTIONS

The Commission has three major functions in the Region: plan and program preparation, review of planning related matters, and representation of Federal planning interests through intergovernmental liaison. In carrying out these functions, NCPC works with Federal departments and agencies, state and regional agencies, and all local jurisdictions. These functions are broken down as follows:

##### Plan and Program Preparation

- o Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital - a statement of goals, policies, and guidelines for the growth and development of the National Capital. The Comprehensive Plan consists of Federal elements prepared and adopted by the Commission and District elements prepared by the Mayor of the District of Columbia, adopted by the council of the District of Columbia, and reviewed by the Commission for Federal interest.

Federal elements address Federal activities and interests in the National Capital, defined by the Planning Act as the District of Columbia and territory owned by the U. S. in the Region. They provide planning guidelines for the development of Federal properties, more effective functioning of the Federal Government, and other Federal planning concerns. They should not be confused with plans prepared by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments or the comprehensive plans of local jurisdictions in the Region.

Implementation of NCPC's comprehensive planning recommendations is entirely dependent on other Federal agencies and departments, and upon state, regional, sub-regional and local agencies which may elect to implement them as part of their own planning program.

In summary, Federal elements of the Comprehensive Plan are intended to the maximum extent practicable to support and complement local, sub-regional, regional and state plans. Although advisory in nature, they provide an important framework for intergovernmental cooperation and coordination on planning matters of mutual interest.

- o Federal Capital Improvements Program for the National Capital Region - an annual program containing those Federal land acquisition and development proposals for the Region which are recommended by the Commission to be considered for funding during the next five years. These recommendations are made to the affected Federal agencies and the Office of Management and Budget to serve as a framework for the preparation and review of annual budget requests for capital outlays.

The program serves as a major tool in guiding and coordinating the implementation of short and long-range Federal plans and programs in the Region. In this regard, one of the major objectives of the Commission in its preparation of the annual program is to facilitate the coordination of proposed Federal developments among Federal agencies, as well as with state, regional, and local governments and organizations in the Region.

Review of Planning Related Matters

- o Proposed Federal agency policies, plans and programs-including regional plans, installation master plans, project plans, and annual capital budgets. Within the District of Columbia, approval by the Commission of plans for Federal public buildings is required. Outside the District, NCPC action on proposed Federal public buildings is advisory.
- o Proposed District of Columbia government policies, plans and programs - including installation master plans, project plans, annual capital improvements program recommendations, and zoning changes. Within the central area of the District of Columbia, approval by the Commission of final plans for District public buildings is required. Outside the central area, NCPC action on proposed District projects is advisory.
- o Policies, plans and programs proposed by state, regional and local agencies and jurisdictions in the Region - including proposed long-range general, comprehensive or master plans, area or district plans indicating more detailed land use and development policies and standards, capital improvement programs, local government project plans, and local zoning changes. All Commission comments

and suggestions on such proposals are advisory.

The purpose of this review is to identify the potential impact on Federal activities and interests in the Washington metropolitan area of such policies, plans, and programs and their relationship to the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital. This review is also intended to be of assistance to non-Federal public agencies by informing them of Federal concerns and plans. This coordination effort is intended to promote governmental efficiency and minimize unnecessary waste and duplication.

Representation of Federal Planning Interests Through Intergovernmental Liaison

- o Referral of proposed Commission policies, plans and programs for review by local, regional and state agencies and jurisdictions - including Federal elements of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital and the annual five-year Federal Capital Improvements Program for the National Capital Region.
- o Referral of other proposed Federal policies, plans and programs for review by local, regional and state agencies, including regional plans, installation master plans and project plans. By law, this review must be completed within 60 days after submission by the initiating Federal agency.
- o Initiation of "early consultation" - a process which gives local governments and area and state clearinghouses an opportunity to learn as early as practicable about proposed Federal projects and developments in the Region. This process permits early identification of possible questions and issues of concern to



local, regional and state officials.

- o Commission review of all of the comments and suggestions received during the regional referral process prior to Commission action and transmittal of its recommendations to the initiating Federal agency or department.
- o Referral to affected Federal agencies and departments of policies, plans and programs proposed by state, regional and local agencies and jurisdictions - a process whereby the affected Federal bodies assist in identifying what impacts these non-Federal proposals have on their activities or interests.

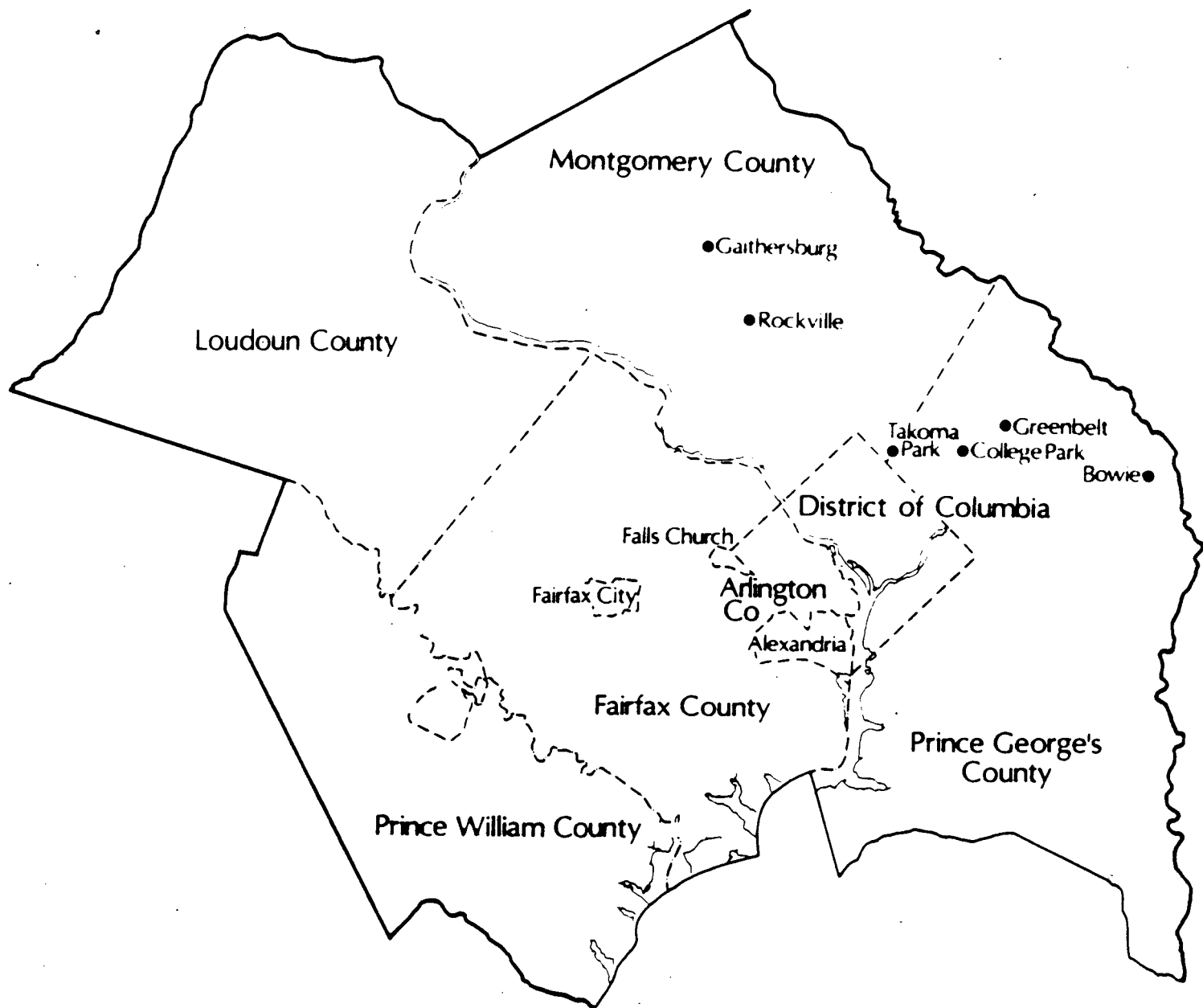
#### PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Current public participation activities conducted by the Commission include the following:

- o Maintaining a mailing list of all citizen organizations, interest groups and individuals in the Region who wish to receive Commission agendas, quarterly reports, notices of available publications and notices of proposed Commission policies, plans, programs and procedures circulated for public review and comment prior to Commission action thereon.
- o Identifying citizen organizations and interest groups that may be particularly interested in proposals considered by the Commission and forwarding copies of such proposals to them for their review and comment prior to Commission action thereon.
- o Hearing interested citizen organizations, interest groups and individuals who wish to present their views at Commission meetings on agenda items under consideration. Public comments are invited

in writing and/or orally before the Commission.

The Commission is interested in the views of individual citizens, citizen organizations and other interest groups in the Region on matters it is considering. In order to assist members of the public to make their views known, revised procedures for citizen participation were adopted on July 31, 1980. A copy is available upon request to the Office of Public Affairs. Additional copies of this pamphlet may also be obtained by calling the Commission's Office of Public Affairs (724-0174) between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m., Monday through Friday.



scale in miles

10 5 0 10

16 8 0 16

scale in kilometers

National Capital Region

Exhibit 1

# PROCESS FOR THE PREPARATION & ADOPTION OF ELEMENTS OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL

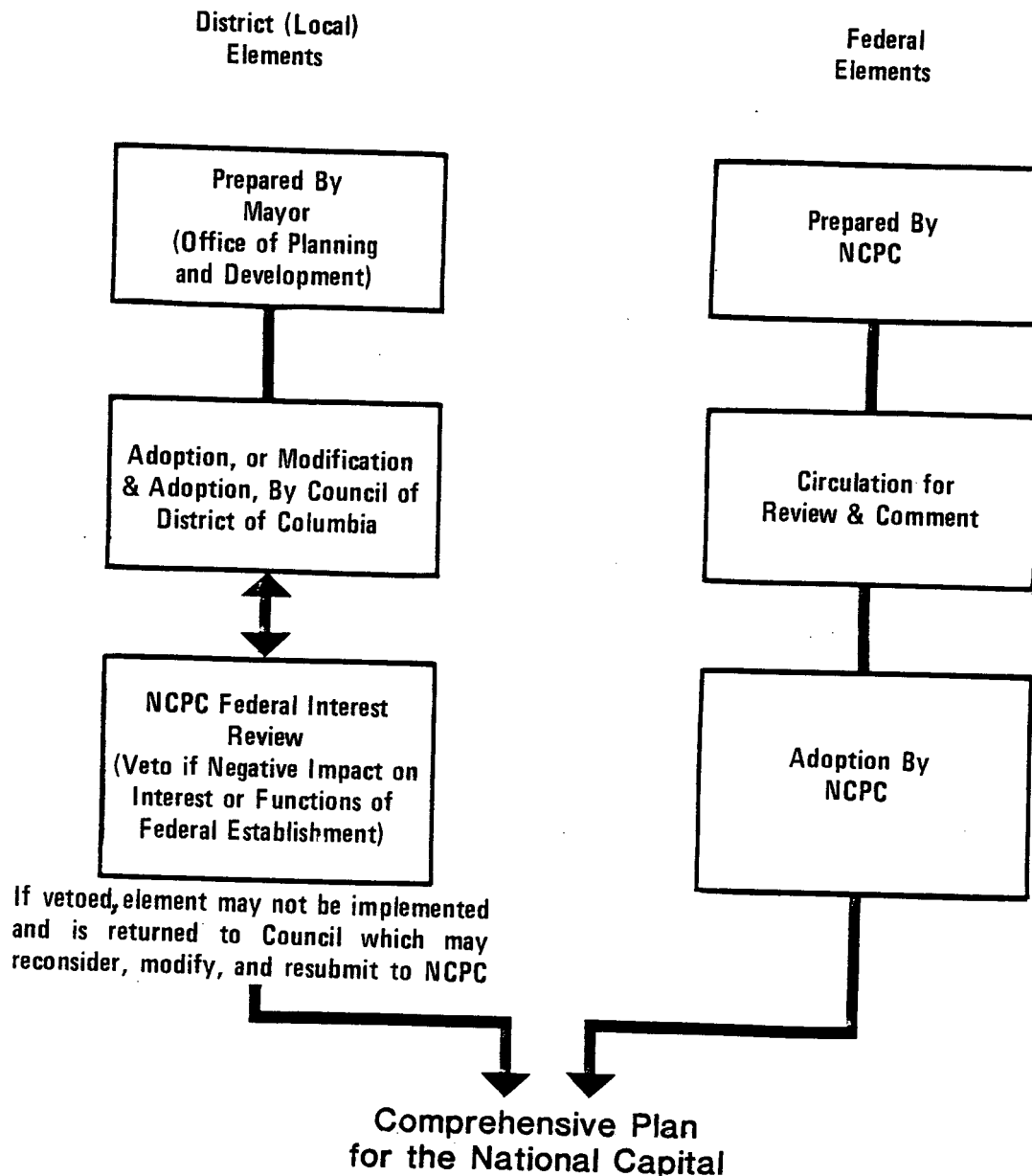


Exhibit 2

### National Capital Planning Commission

#### Process for Regional Referral of Proposed Federal Development Policies, Plans and Programs in the Region

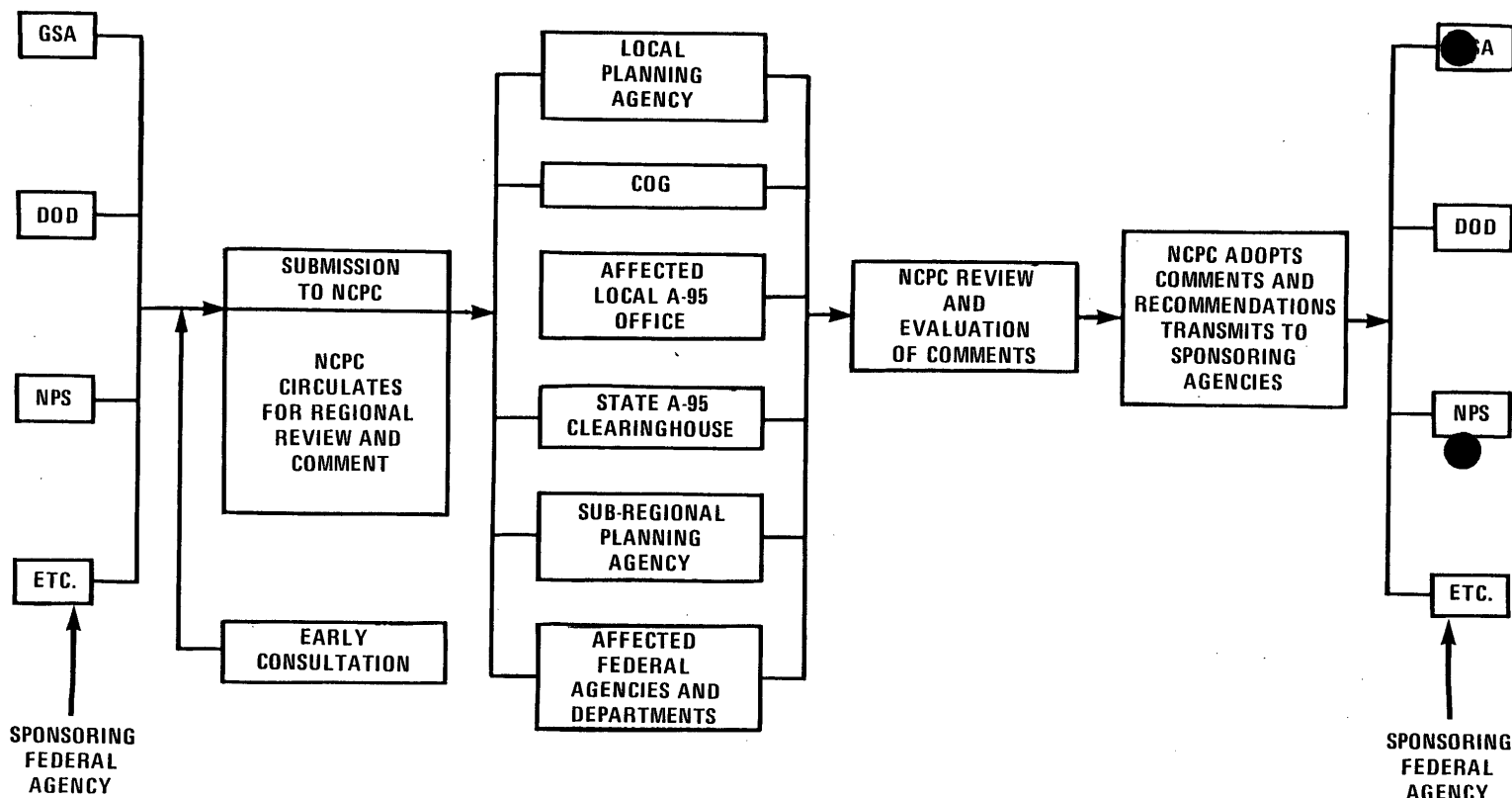
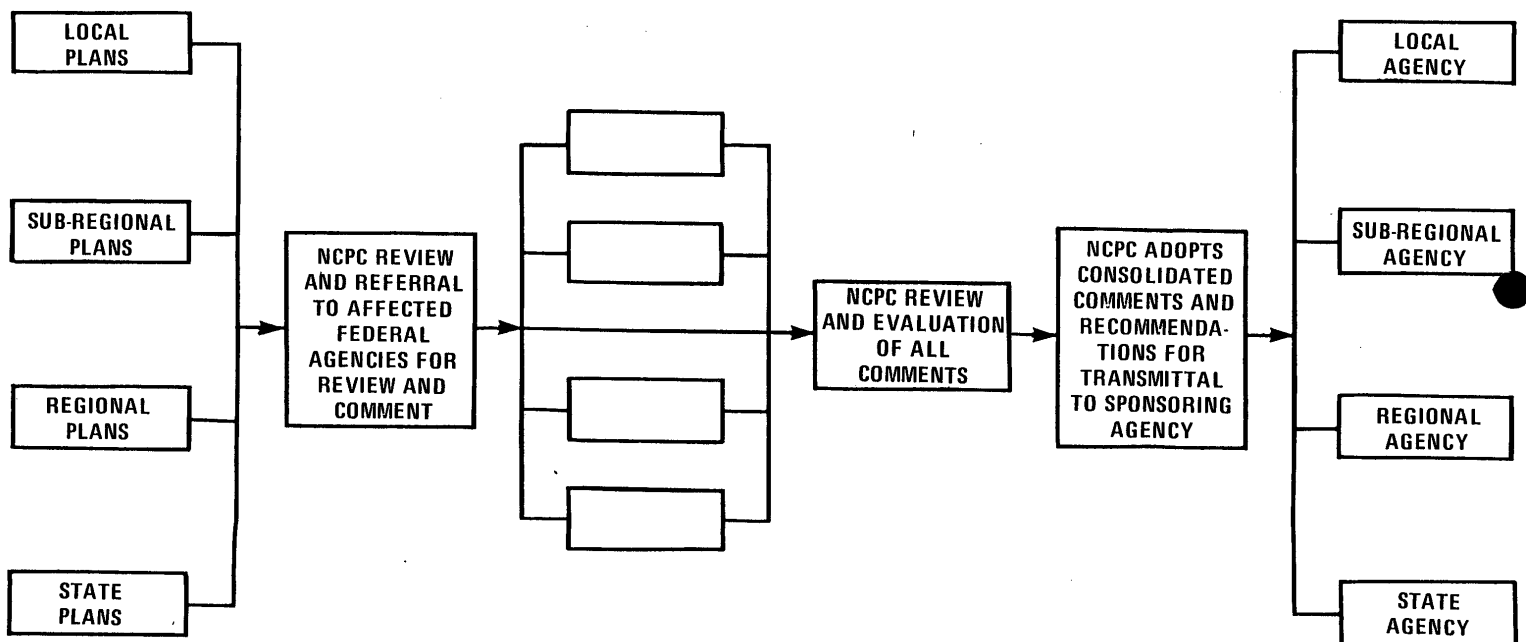


Exhibit 3

**Process for Review of Local, Sub-Regional, Regional and State Policies, Plans and Programs and Evaluation of their Potential Impacts, if any, on Federal Activities and Interests in the National Capital Region**



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Paul R. R.

Gerry

Jim

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